



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD KICKS OFF “OPERATION SANTA EXPRESS”**

HARTFORD, Conn., - Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, the Adjutant General and Commander of the Connecticut National Guard announces today the implementation of “Operation Santa Express,” to help families of deployed soldiers during the holiday season.

The Connecticut Army National Guard Family Program will be delivering more than 650 gifts to Connecticut National Guard families of deployed soldiers during the next few days.

The gifts include toys, gift cards and holiday greeting cards that will be delivered to more than 200 families and will be transported by Connecticut Army National Guard Express vehicle.

“The support and generosity has been overwhelming and it is heartwarming to know that our families and the children of our deployed soldiers are taken care of at Christmas,” said Cugno.

The packaging, sorting and loading is being done at the Hartford Armory by the Family Program beginning today through Wednesday, December 23, 2004.

All toys and gifts were donated in support of “Operation ELF” initiated by Gov. M. Jodi Rell in conjunction with the Connecticut National Guard. “Operation ELF” focuses on providing assistance to family members through donations and care packages to include deployed troops.